

Reducing Obstetrician Barriers to Offering HIV Testing



Ann Maxwell
Project Leader
Office of Inspector General
Office of Evaluation and Inspections

PURPOSE

Examine obstetrician barriers to offering HIV testing to pregnant women and newborns in order to reduce the incidence of perinatally transmitted HIV

Congressional Mandate:

Ryan White CARE Act Amendments 2000, Section 2628

Required Estimate

- Number of newborn infants with HIV born in the US with respect to whom the attending obstetrician for the birth did not know the HIV status of the mother

Obstetrician Barriers to Offering HIV Testing

- Pregnant women
- Newborn infants

Scope Based on Congressional Mandate

- Focused on obstetricians
- Focused only on barriers obstetricians face in *offering* HIV testing

Limited Scope in context of Perinatal Transmission Prevention

The proportion of women...

- *who are HIV-infected
 - *who become pregnant
 - *who do not seek prenatal care, *or who are not offered HIV testing* or who refuse HIV testing
 - *who are not offered treatment, *or* who refuse treatment
 - *who do not complete treatment
 - *whose child is infected despite treatment

Methodology

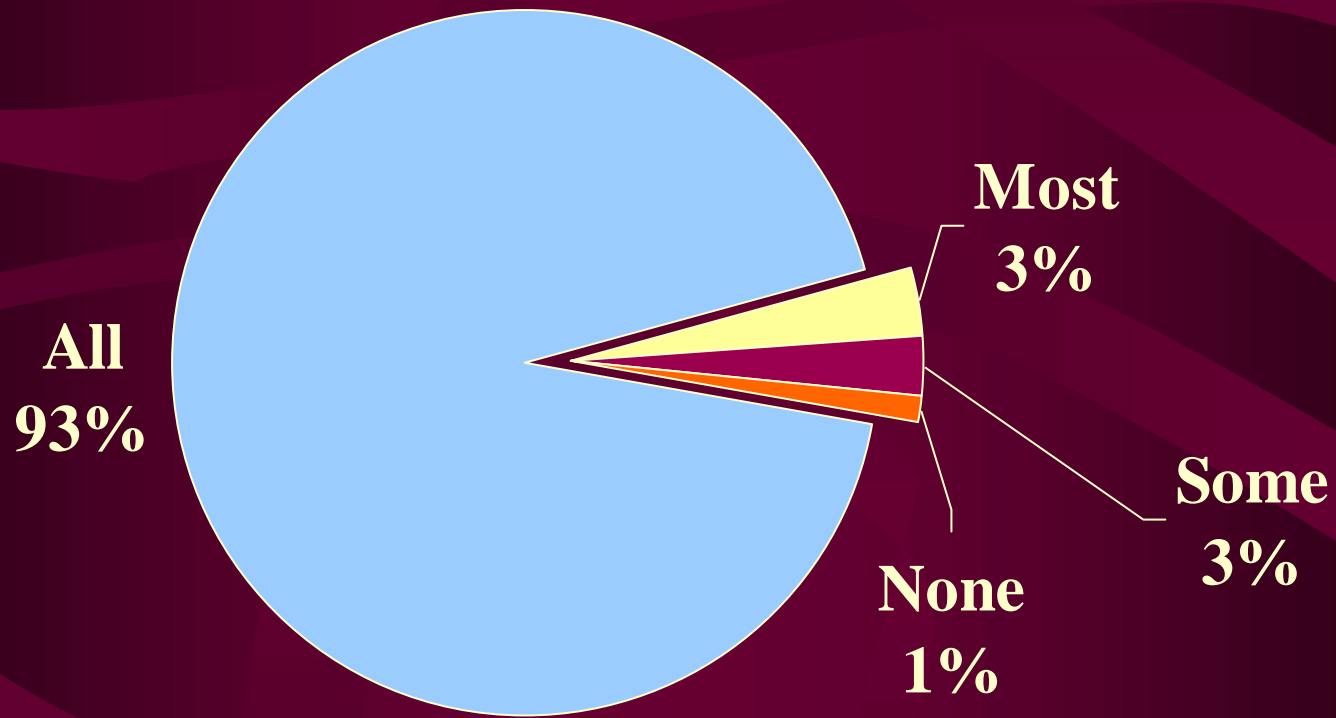
- Obstetrician perspective of barriers
 - National survey of obstetricians
- State-by-State identification of barriers
 - Survey of obstetrician State representatives
 - Survey of State HIV/AIDS directors
 - Case studies in six high prevalence States
 - » NY, NJ, GA, FL, TX, CA

FINDINGS

1. Prenatal setting
2. Labor & delivery setting
3. Testing newborns

Prenatal Care Setting: Testing Practices

To how many of your patients do you offer HIV testing?



Prenatal Care Setting: Barriers

- 32% of all OBs indicated ever facing a barrier that prevented them from offering an HIV test to a prenatal patient
- 66 % of OBs reported both routinely testing and having never encountered a barrier

Prenatal Care Setting: Barriers

Barriers are less likely to obstruct OBs:

- ▶ Who practice in high prevalence counties
- ▶ Whose work places have written policy on HIV testing of pregnant women
- ▶ Who report receiving educational materials or training on perinatal HIV from CDC
- ▶ Who knew their State's laws regarding HIV testing

Prenatal Care Setting: Barriers

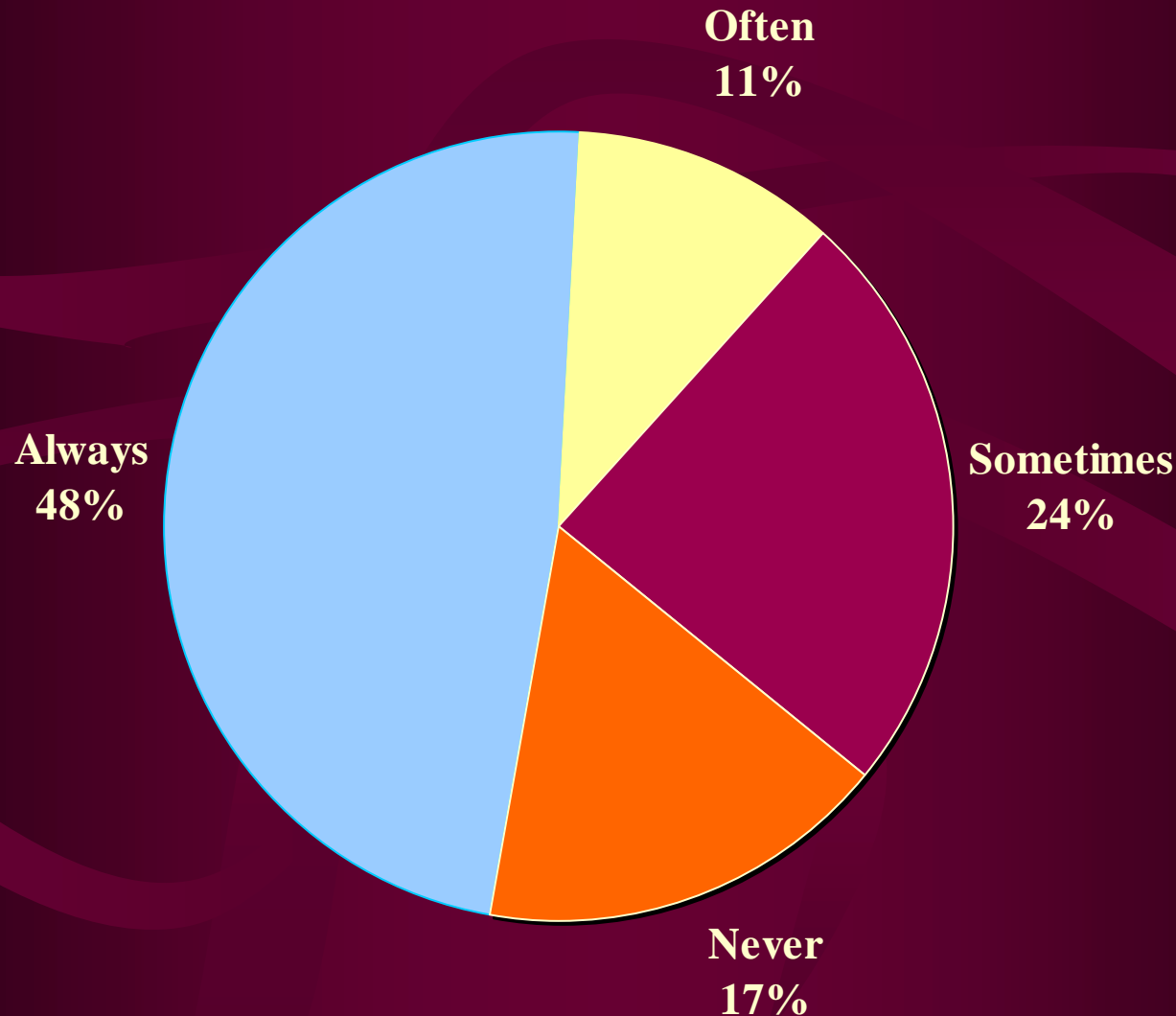
Barriers That Have Ever Been a Reason for Not Offering an HIV Test to a Prenatal Patient

Barriers to Offering HIV Testing	Percentage of obstetricians
Language barrier	15 %
Late entry into prenatal care	13 %
Patient population is at low risk	13 %
Pretest counseling too time consuming	5 %
Consent process too time consuming	5 %
Concern about offending patient	5 %
Inadequate reimbursement	2 %
It is not the standard of care in my hospital/clinic	1 %
Concern about informing a pregnant woman she is HIV positive	1 %
Concern about treating an HIV-positive patient	1 %

Source: OIG national survey of obstetricians

Labor & Delivery: Testing Practices

Do you offer HIV testing to women in labor with unknown HIV status?



Labor & Delivery: Barriers

- 44% of OBs reported at least one barrier
- OBs are less likely to face barriers if:
 - ▶ practice in high prevalence county
 - ▶ received educational materials from the hospital

Labor & Delivery: Barriers

Barriers That Have Ever Been a Reason for Not Offering an HIV Test to a Patient during Labor and Delivery

Barriers to Offering HIV Testing	Percentage of obstetricians
Process Barriers	
Insufficient time to counsel during labor	32 %
Too difficult to obtain consent during labor	28 %
Technology Barriers	
Test results take too long	19 %
Rapid or expedited HIV tests not available	18 %
Too late for preventive treatment	17 %
Too much emotional stress for patient	9 %
Hospital did not have antiretroviral drugs available for treatment	1 %

Source: OIG national survey of obstetricians

Testing Newborns

- 93% of OBs reported HIV testing of newborns is responsibility of the newborn's physician
- 1/5th of OBs report always recommending HIV testing for the newborn to the newborn's physician in cases where the mother's HIV status is unknown

Obstetrician Solutions

To What Extent would each of the following help you to routinely offer HIV testing to all of your pregnant patients?

	Obs with Barriers	All OBs
Inclusion of HIV test in standard prenatal testing battery	82%	79%
Making voluntary HIV testing of all pregnant women the standard of care in my hospital/clinic	60%	57%
Designation a non-physician to conduct HIV counseling and consent	56%	52%
Patient education materials	46%	53%
Reduce time involved in counseling	42%	37%
Reduce time for consent	40%	35%
Resource lists of HIV specialists	33%	39%
Education courses on perinatal HIV	24%	27%
Scripts for HIV counseling	23%	25%
Training on HIV counseling	18%	22%

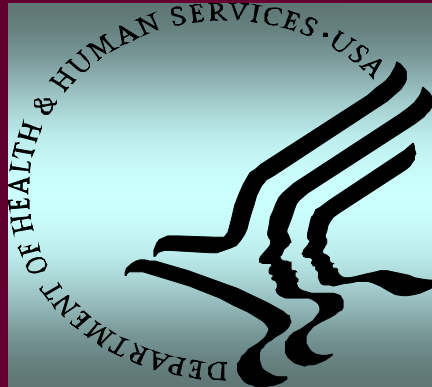
Report Publication

- Signed out by the IG in March
- Final report posted on OEI web site
 - www.hhs.gov/oig/oei
 - What's New
 - Search Reports

Next Steps

- Secretary required to present evaluation findings to Congress by April 2002
 - Recommendations for each State for reducing the incidence of cases of the perinatal transmission of HIV, including recommendations on removing the barriers identified
- Secretary required to provide to Congress information regarding States' progress in FY 2004

Contact Information



Ann Maxwell

312-353-1012

amaxwell@os.dhhs.gov